



### Then and Now

When the earth is wrapped in silence  
With the mantle of the night,  
And I seek the cozy corner  
Where the fire is burning bright,  
And I gaze upon the shadows  
Where the fitful firelight gleams,  
Fancy takes me with her backward  
To my vanished boyhood dreams.

And again the airy castles  
That I built before me rise,  
And I smile at boyish visions  
As they pass before my eyes.

Once again I tramp the furrow  
With my hand upon the plow,  
And the fragrance of the meadows  
Brings a longing to me now.

There beyond the hills and pastures  
With its shining, golden spires,  
Full of wealth and dazzling promise,  
Stood the City of Desires.

There the way to fame and fortune  
Easy sailing of the seas;  
There the rounds of joy and pleasure  
Midst a life of pampered ease.

There no more the weary burdens  
That the farm forever brings;  
Only hours of glad employment  
That flew by on golden wings.

Ah, the dreams my youthful longing  
Built upon my discontent,  
With the rainbow hues around them,  
And enchantment distance lent!

Gone those dreams! How quickly  
Vanished!  
Time and tide have changed since  
Then,  
And I'm weary with the city—  
Longing for the farm again:  
—J. Schuyler Long.

### Caring for the Children

When we send the children out of the house to the public school, we must try to realize that it is the whole child that is being taught—the physical and moral, as well as the mental. The man or woman we employ to "hear books" is but one of the teachers. Every schoolmate, every environment, has more or less to do with the learner's education, and it seems impossible to guard against the objectionable lessons; in many cases, these are the ones the most thoroughly learned, most strongly remembered, and most impossible to eradicate from the child's education. If we could be sure of our child's confidence, sure that we are told the innermost thoughts, we might hope in part to combat the teaching; but the parent seldom knows the child as well as a stranger would, for there seems a tendency on the child's part to conceal, to veil many things which it intuitively knows the parent would seriously object to, and the knowledge of this learning comes like a shock to the parent who has always claimed the child to be a marvel of innocence and ignorance on certain subjects. I wish those who have successfully solved this problem—the problem of how to combat this injurious teaching—would write me of their methods. I have frequent letters asking for just such advice, but, from lack of experience, can not give it. It is a serious question, and I would like facts, not especially theories.

The Delineator says: "The habit which many women have of never

throwing anything away leads to endless clutter. Precious time is wasted in taking care of these things, and the space occupied by them is frequently needed for more necessary possessions. To such housekeepers, a bonfire would be a real blessing; but to pass the things on to others would be better."

### Neglect of Spelling

At an examination of students of an eastern university, recently it was developed that many of the students who stood high in other branches were remarkably deficient in orthography of common words. At the examination referred to, the prize for best spelling was awarded to a young student who had received his elementary education at a country school. But even the country schools are giving less attention to the matter of correct spelling than formerly, as multiplicity of studies abridges the time formerly devoted to this fundamental branch, and the country boys and girls, like those of the city, are leaving school with a smattering of much, rather than a thoroughness of any.

It would be a hard matter for a poor speller to convince the world that he is an educated person, for correct spelling is one of the best evidences of culture, and there really is little excuse for slovenly orthography. In these days, when everybody reads more or less, it is an easy matter to observe the form of words, and thus detect any error in one's own spelling. Dictionaries are cheap—a very good hand dictionary can be had for twenty-five cents, and where there is a growing family of young people, there should be both a hand dictionary for ordinary use, and an unabridged for more particular definition. A very profitable way to spend the evenings of the coming winter would be to have periodical spelling matches, where several families of friends could meet at each other's houses, and find both entertainment and culture. Many of our elderly people remember with pleasure the "spelling matches" of their youth, and these could be revived with profit to all.

### Christmas Shopping

Do not delay your Christmas shopping until the last few days; others will do that, and if you do, you are very apt to find yourself very uncomfortably "one of a crowd."

In giving presents, do not go beyond your means, thereby giving the gift an appearance of barter and exchange. Many persons prefer a pretty, useless gift to a pretty useful one. Just something to show that you hold your friend in remembrance, is best. Only a selfish person will misunderstand.

Try to avoid all appearance of "shop," unless you are quite sure you understand your friend's taste, and the need of the moment. This is not always easy to do. As an instance, a lady who writes a great deal, but does all her work with a typewriter, using her pen only for her signature, showed me a box full of pen-wipers of all kinds, sizes and costs, and an equal number of blotting pads, many of them very elaborate affairs. Another friend has something over a dozen fountain pens, while another has a drawer full of paper cutters and pencil trays, not one of them, while costing considerable, is suited to her needs; being

chosen by persons who do not know enough about a "writing woman's work" to discriminate in the matter.

Many things, being left until a belated shopping, are bought in desperation, and neither the giver nor the receiver is satisfied with them. If you are hurried or worried, or do not know exactly what you want to give, or what would suit your friend, there is always one sure refuge, and that is the pretty picture card, or the postal with your good wishes inscribed thereon, and, better still, a pleasantly worded letter, sending your cordial good wishes and assurances of continued regard.

For those who are far from you, the good, homey letter is the best of all. And it costs so little, compared to its value to the receiver!

### Building an Ice House

The situation should be selected with a northern exposure, protected by a building or a hill on the south, if possible. It should be well drained by ditches so that all water will lead away from the building, and no water should be allowed to stand around it, as the sawdust with which it is to be packed has a tendency to draw moisture. The house should have an outer and an inner wall with about six inches space between, and this space should be well packed with sawdust, or, if sawdust can not be obtained, chaff, or finely cut straw may be used, and in any case, the packing should be well tamped down. The floor should not be a tight one, but should have cracks large enough to admit of the passing off of any water from the melting ice. The roof should be quite sloping, and there should be free ventilation from the top, but none at all from the bottom.

The crudest and most inexpensive structures keep ice just as well as more pretentious buildings, and if one does not wish to go to the expense of building a house with double walls, any unused building can be utilized by storing the ice a foot or more from the wall and using extra precautions in packing the sawdust between the ice and the wall, leaving the top open (not unroofed) to ventilate.

The successful keeping of the ice depends more upon the proper packing than upon the building. The loose floor should be covered with a layer of clean straw on top of which a layer of sawdust or chaff a foot or more thick has been well tamped down. The ice must be cut and stored on a very cold day, the solidest ice procurable selected. Ice containing air bubbles is harder to keep than solid ice. Cut the ice in as large blocks as possible to handle conveniently, and allow them to freeze an hour or two before packing. Place the chunks in the house in a square, compact heap, leaving about a foot between the ice and the inner wall. As the heap grows, fill this space with sawdust, tamping it well. When the house is filled, place two feet of sawdust on top, pack and tamp down well. Examine the house occasionally, and where sunken places are found, fill with fresh sawdust. A house twelve feet square will furnish a large supply of ice for family use, and some to spare. In many localities, where ice can not be obtained, snow may be stored in the same way, by first compressing it into compact blocks of the desired size, which almost any one with a lit-

tle skill can do, during very cold weather, and saturating the blocks with water, allowing it to freeze solid, then packing. It is well known that snow, when placed in the house and well packed in sawdust will solidify and become almost like ice. In many places where snow has been accidentally covered by the toppling of a straw stack, it will be found until very late in the spring, in a good state of preservation, if the straw has been deep enough. (These directions were sent in by one of our readers who has used the method for years.)

### Query Box

Mrs. E. J.—Sorry this is your first visit to the Query Box, but hope it will not be the last. Recipes given in another column.

S. M.—The addition of a small piece of gum camphor to a lampful of oil is said to make the light more brilliant.

Samantha—I do not think any method is known by which to prevent the shrinkage of cotton fabrics when wet in the wash, though some will shrink more than others. Put through the wash quickly, and dry as soon as possible.

C. C.—Sometimes nothing will heal chapped hands and lips until the general health is improved. Or it may be a sort of disease of the skin needing special treatment. For ordinary cases, wash the hands and face with little "bran bags" instead of soap, dry thoroughly, and then pour into the palms a few drops of a solution consisting of one tablespoonful of glycerine, the juice of one lemon and four tablespoonfuls of distilled or boiled water, and rub well into the skin until dry. Do this after every washing or wetting of the hands.

M. M.—Three or four pounds of sulphate of iron (copperas), dissolved in a pailful of hot water and poured into the vaults and cess-pools will remove the offensive smell. One peck of charcoal-dust, sifted, thrown down the vault once a fortnight, is effective. One pint of liquor of chloride of zinc in one pailful of water; and one pound of chloride of lime in another pail of water; when thoroughly dissolved, throw into the vault, or on offensive matter of any description, and this will effectually destroy all malodors. The cost of either is small.

Mrs. R.—Keep the ink bottle well corked. The air not only evaporates the fluid, but oxidizes it, making it thick and gummy. It is said that a whole clove dropped in the ink bottle will keep the fluid from moulding.

M. S. D.—To renovate the old-fashioned tin-paneled safe, get, for the woodwork, a small box of burnt umber, thin it with equal parts of turpentine and linseed oil until it will flow smoothly from the brush. Paint the wood work with this, and let get thoroughly dry; then give two coats of "inside" varnish—always letting the first coat get perfectly dry before applying the second. For the tins, take a little Tuscan red and mix in like manner as the burnt umber, and give the tin two coats of this—allowing each coat to dry thoroughly before giving the next; then, when the second coat is perfectly dry, give two coats of the varnish, as in the case of the wood.

Mrs. S. L.—Here is a good furniture polish which will remove white spots from varnished and oiled surfaces and restore the gloss: One cupful of cold drawn linseed oil, one cupful of powdered rottenstone, half cupful of alcohol, half a cupful of naphtha, one cupful of turpentine, one cupful of strong solution of oxalic

AN OLD AND WELL TRIED REMEDY  
Mrs. Winslow's SOOTHING SYRUP for children  
teething should always be used for children while  
teething. It softens the gums, allays the pain, cures  
wind colic and is the best remedy for diarrhoea.  
Twenty-five cents a bottle.